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UNCLAS GUATEMALA 001754

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR PM/WRA, WHA/CEN, AND WHA/PPC

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KHDP](#) [MOPS](#) [MARR](#) [PREL](#) [GT](#)

SUBJECT: GUATEMALA NEAR COMPLETION OF DEMINING

REF: STATE 105813

**¶1.** Summary: Per reftel request for planning inputs for the Department's FY06 PM/WRA Humanitarian Mine Action (HMA) Strategic Plan, post is not submitting such inputs as the Guatemalan Government's HMA plan forecasts a completion of all demining activity in Guatemala by October 2005. The following paragraphs describe the results and current state of Guatemala's HMA efforts. End Summary.

**¶2.** According to the Guatemalan National Coordinator for Demining, guerrilla encampments near the Tajumulco Volcano in San Marcos Department represented the only significant presence of landmines in Guatemala. Following clearance of this area, demining efforts have centered on discovery and deactivation of unexploded ordnance (UXO). The resident OAS office which assists GOG demining efforts is currently headed by a Honduran civilian director and includes one Venezuelan and two Honduran military officers.

**¶3.** From January 1998 to May 2005, the GOG destroyed a total of 4,093 artefacts (mines and UXO) and executed mine awareness campaigns that reached 388,365 individuals and 1,530 communities. The Guatemalan plan targeted 14 of the 22 departments (provinces) in Guatemala; as of September 2004, the GOG had completed operations in eight of the 14 departments. The GOG "clears" a department by deploying mine awareness/public information teams to solicit information about UXO locations. Engineer teams then follow up by destroying any discovered UXO.

**¶4.** 2005 operations began in the Peten Department and have expanded to the final five departments clustered in the center of Guatemala (Solola, Suchitepequez, Chimaltenango, Escuintla, and Sacatepequez). The GOG deployed five awareness and three engineer teams to the Peten in February 2005; these teams will complete their work by October 2005. Four awareness and one engineer team deployed to the remaining five departments in April 2005; these teams are also scheduled to conclude operations in October 2005. Following completion of operations, the GOG plans to conduct a public ceremony to declare Guatemala free of mines and UXO.  
WHARTON